

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN SA 04018 031604Z
ACTION SCS-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 HA-05 ISO-00 CA-01 H-01 L-03 SS-15
NSC-05 SY-05 /052 W
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R 031529Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9109

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAN SALVADOR 4018

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SHUM, ES
SUBJ: CATECHIST FOR U.S. MARKNOLL GROUP IN SANTA
ANA ARRESTED

1. POLITICAL OFFICER CALLED EARLY MORNING SAT-
URDAY, JULY 29 BY MARYKNOLL PRIEST JOHN HALBERT CONCERNING ARREST
OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE (CATECHIST) NORMA DE SOLORZANO. FATHER
HALBERT REPORTED THAT MRS. SOLORZANO HAD BEEN ARRESTED BY
SEVEN ARMED MEMBERS OF GOES SECURITY FORCES APPROXIMATELY
1 A.M. SATURDAY, JULY 29. EFFORTS OF MARYKNOLL FATHERS IN
DIRECT CONTACT WITH MEMBERS OF GOES SECURITY FORCES AND
JUDICIAL UQSTEM IN SANTA ANA FAILED KPTO REVEAL ANY INFORMATION
CONCERNING MRS. SOLORZANO.

2. AFTER CONSULTATION WITH AMBASSADOR, DATT CONTACTED MINISTER
OF DEFENSE CASTILLO YANES WHO SEVERAL HOURS LATER REPORTED THAT
MRS. SOLORZANO WAS IN FACT IN CUSTODY OF NATIONAL POLICE IN SAN
SALVADOR. MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND NATIONAL POLICE EXTREMELY
COOPERATIVE AND RELEASED MRS. SOLORZANO TO CUSTODY OF FATHER
HALBERT LATERNOON JULY 30. POLOFF TALKED TO MRS.
SOLORZANO AND FATHER HALBERT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING HER
RELEASE. SHE STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT SHE WAS NOT
TORTURED NOR PHYSICALLY MISTREATED DURING PERIOD OF
INCARCERATION AND THAT ARREST WAS PROBABLY DUE TO
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POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF HER HUSBAND. HER SIGNED STATEMENT
TO HALBERT INDICATED, HOWEVER, AN IMPLIED THREAT OF TORTURE.

3. COMMENT. AMERICAN MARYKNOLL PRIEST EXCEEDINGLY
DISTURBED BY ARREST OF MRS. SOLORZANO. HOWEVER, WITH
LATER ADMISSION BY MRS. SOLORZANO AND OTHERS THAT
ALLEGED SUBVERSIVE PROPAGANDA FOUND IN HOUSE WHEN SHE

WAS ARRESTED (SHE STATES WERE PROPERTY OF HER HUSBAND),
SITUATION SLIGHTLY CHANGED. IT DOES APPEAR THAT
HUSBAND ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN ACTIVITIES OF POPULAR
REVOLUTIONARY BLOC (BPR) BUT MRS. SOLORZANO COMPLETELY
REMOVED FROM THIS ACTIVITY. FATHER HALBERT, HEAD OF
MARYKNOLL GROUP IN SANTA ANA, EXCEEDINGLY PLEASED WITH
EMBASSY ASSISTANCE IN THIS POTENTIALLY NEWSWORTHY ARREST.
COMPLETE DETAILS INCLUDING STATEMENTS BY FATHER HALBERT
AND MRS. SOLORZANO FOLLOW BY AIRGRAM.
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Message Attributes

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Concepts: CLERGYMEN, ARRESTS
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Draft Date: 03 aug 1978
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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Disposition History: n/a
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